Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0898LA-1 for Iberville Parish School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	6

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Iberville Parish School District proposed a district-wide grade 5-12 integrated blended learning program with a three tiered Response to Intervention system to implement college and career readiness initiatives. The proposal provided a brief description of the district's context and recent reform efforts, including new leadership, Response to Intervention, transformation model, and the Teacher Advancement Program. This appeared to represent a comprehensive and coherent reform vision that would accelerate student achievement, deepen student learning, and increase equity. However, this section did not explicitly identify how two of the four core educational assurances, would be incorporated and built upon: (i) personnel evaluation system and (iii) data system. There was a brief mention in the TAP of increasing teacher and leader effectiveness and differentiated compensation for teachers. Therefore, this section was rated in the Medium range.

	Available	Score
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	4

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

a) Iberville Parish School District did not fully address this sub-crterion as they did not include a list of participating schools. Instead, they reported that they used roundtable discussions with teachers, school principals, and the superintendent. In addition, the teachers were surveyed with the results of the survey included in the appendices. The section indicated that the percentages of students at grades 5-12 collectively met the eligibility requirements. The process they used to obtain input appeared sufficient.

(b) This sub-criterion was not addressed as the proposal did not include a list of participating schools in grant activities.

(c) This sub-criterion did not include a list of participating schools. Instead, this section included a table on demographics of grade 5-12 students, including: the total numbers and percentages of participating students who are from low income families and high-needs students. The total numbers of educators were also identified for these grades. The information the applicant provided for the total numbes of students and by student groups appeared sufficient.

Therefore, given comments above, this section was rated in the Medium range.

	Available	Score
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	2

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Iberville Parish School District did not include a project plan with goals, activities, timelines and persons responsible. Rather in the appendices, there was a copy of the district accountability plan which included goals, activities, persons responsible, timelines, and evaluation. However, the accountability plan did not refer to the blended learning program in any of the goals. There was one reference under Goal #6, cohort graduation rate, that identified using technology to fully engage high school students in daily learning activities for 2012-13 school year. A strength was that the proposal referenced the six models of blended learning; however, they did not identify the academic content subjects that would incorporate the blended learning. A logic model was not presented. There was a general reference that the blended learning program would challenge average students to progress and individualized attention for high-risk students. But there was not a clear theory of change on how their proposal would specifically improve student learning outcomes for all students.

Therefore, this section was given a rating in the low range.

	Available	Score
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	4

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(a) Iberville Parish School District presented completed tables for performance on summative assessments in ELA and math for grades 4 and 9 for the following student groups: overall, economically disadvantaged, and African American. The Table included baseline and yearly goals that increased 2% to 3%, They did not include a rationale for why these grades were selected; but since their proposal addressed 5-12, annual goals for these grade levels should have been included. The table also presented baseline and goals for increasing the percent of 11th graders scoring on the ACT Test. However, data for economically disadvantaged and African Americans were not available but there was no explanation. The goals for 11th graders increased by 1% yearly. The annual goals appear achievable but not ambitious since they only identified yearly targets ranging from 2% to 3%.

(b) Decreasing achievement gaps: The section included completed tables of baseline and goals with achievement gaps identified between economically disadvantaged and non-economically disadvantaged and African American and white students on grades 5-8 and 9-11 in ELA and math combined. There was no explanation as to why they combined ELA and math. The yearly goals represented 2% of students so that by the end of the project there were still gaps ranging between 12% and 15%. The annual goals appear achievable but not ambitious since the yearly targets only represented 2% increases and there would still be signficant gaps.

(c) Graduation Rates: High school graduation rates baseline and goals were only reported for overall students with data not available for economically disadvantaged and African American students. There was not explanation of why data was not available. The graduation rates increased by 6.2% on a yearly basis so that by 2016-17 the overall graduation rate would be 85%. The goals appeared achievable and ambitious since they identified yearly goals increasing by at least 6%..

(d) College Enrollment: Baseline and yearly goals were provided for overall college enrollment rate with yearly increases of 1.6%. Data was not available for economically disadvantaged nor African America and there was no explanation for why. The overall enrollment rate appeared achievable but not ambitious since they only identified yearly increases of less than 2%.

Given the above comments, this section was given a medium rating.

B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	3

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(1) Iberville Parish School District did not provide a clear record of success in the past four years that addressed all sub-criterion.

Instead, Iberville Parish School District described its recent reform efforts. The section included a graph of the District Performance Score from 2008 to 2012. This score is based on: student achievement data, cohort graduation rate, graduation index, attendance, and dropouts. The graph indicated growth across the years. The appendices included: cohort dropout rates, district cohort data, school cohort data, and district level report. The cohort dropout rate included data from 2006-07 to 2010-11 (preliminary) with evidence of decreases from 25.2% to 14.5%. The proposal also included cohort dropout rate for three schools from 2006-07 to 2010-11. One school evidenced steady decline, while two schools evidenced erratic rates. The summative performance data and the closing the achievement gap data compared 2010/2011 and the college and career readiness data compared 2009-10/2011 data. This does not represent four years of data and a clear record of success.

(a) Improve student learning outcomes: The summative performance data and the closing the achievement gap data in the appendices compared 2010/2011 school years and not four years.

(b) Lowest achieving schools: This subcriterion was not fully addressed. The proposal referenced that two low performing schools were closed prior to 2009-10 SY. But the proposal did not indicate the current status of its schools and whether there were any low achieving schools. There was also a mention of a federal grant in 2010 to implement a comprehensive systemic reform model implementation TAP. But they described the TAP components rather than describing the impact of the TAP on the district and schools.

(c) Student performance data available to inform and improve participation, instruction, and services: The proposal indicated that the data reports are provided to school board meetings and through school improvement meetings. However, they did not describe how data informs and improves student participation, instruction, and services. Therefore this subcritreion was not fully addressed.

Overall, this section received a rating in the low range.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	2

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Iberville Parish School District indicated that budgets are presented to the school board and to the public. The budgets for employee salaries at all levels and at all schools are available from the school board office. School budgets and district budgets as a whole are published on the district's web site. This section could have been improved by explicitly addressing the following sub-criterion.

(a) See statement above. The description did not include a breakdown between school level instructional and support staff.

(b) See statement above. The description did not include a breakdown at the school level for instructional staff.

(c)) See statement above. The description did not include a breakdown at the school level for teachers only.

(d) The proposal stated that the budget includes operating expenses.

Therefore since the proposal did not address (a), (b), and (c) there was not a high level of transparency described, this section was rated in the Medium range because the proposal did provide information on the district and school budgets.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	5

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Iberville Parish School District proposal described recent state legislation and regulatory requirements focused on teacher quality, the state's educational plan, district network structure, ESEA flexibility waiver, and handbook for school administrators. Details were provided in this section as well as copies of the legislation in the appendices. In addition, the proposal referenced the district's technology plan. However, there was no reference to whether the state had any statutory and/or regulatory requirements for blended learning that would support or hinder implementation of the project. There was a general statement that the district would implement these according to the flexibility they provided for the district to implement personalized learning for students. This section would have been stronger if the district had specifically described how the state legislation and regulatory requirements would impact the implementation of the proposed project and particularly the state's regulatory requirements related to blended learning. The section was rated in the Medium range.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	5

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(a) Iberville Parish School District reported that they used roundtable discussions with teachers, school principals, and the superintendent. Focus groups were led by principals, the superintendent, and district leaders. Teacher surveys were conducted. However, there was no explicit description of how parents and students were involved. There was also no description of how the proposal was revised based on the engagement and feedback of stakeholders.

(ii) In addition, the teachers were surveyed with the results of the survey included in the appendices. 205 teachers responded to the survey. However, the survey questions did not address blended learning with only one question generally referencing expanded technology (1:1 initaitive to lower grades) which 47.3% responded that they would like the grant to address. 88% of the surveyed educators indicated yes to the question do you support the school system's intent to apply for the Race to the Top funds. However, there was no explicit description of how parents and students were involved in the process. There was also no description of how the proposal was revised based on engagement of other stakeholders.

Given the statement about the criteria for at least 70% of teachers were needed supported the proposal and that a the application assurances were left blank for president of the local teacher's union or assocation, it was assumed that the district did not have collective bargaining. It was not explicitly stated.

(b) The proposal contained letters of support from the mayor, the parish council, one university which is partnering with the district in an NSF grant, a technical college, and a second university which is partnering with the district to implement an accelerated academic achievement initiative. The applicant does not completely address this subcriterion because it did not include letters of support from key stakeholders, parents or parent organizations, local businesses, and community-based organizations.

This section was rated in the medium range.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	2

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

Iberville Parish School District reported that they took initial steps in 2012-13 toward implementing personalized learning environments through a laptop computer initiative for grades-12 students. This section repeated their primary intent to implement a blended learning program. This section briefly described their data system and included two tables. The first table identified current student proficiency in ELA and math for grades 5-12 for all participating students, African American, and economically disadvantaged. The second table identified subgroups, % proficiency, and achievement gap. These tables were confusing and needed more detailed descriptions/explanations.

Iberville Parish School District did not include a specific project plan with goals, activities, timelines and persons responsible in this section. Rather in the appendices, there was a copy of the district accountability plan which included goals, current status (where we are), activities, persons responsible, timelines, and evaluation activities. The plan included eight goals addressing kindergarten readiness, student attendance and proficiency for 4th and 9th grade, on-track to college for 9th and 11th graders, cohort graduation rate, persistence through college, and college enrollment and workforce readiness. However, the accountability plan did not refer to the blended learning program in any of the goals. There was one reference under Goal #6, cohort graduation rate, that identified using technology to fully engage high school students in daily learning activities for 2012-13 school year. While the submitted plan appears to be a district-wide comprehensive plan, a specific plan for analyzing the district's current status in implementing personalized learning environments was needed. In addition, the proposal did not include a description of the logic behind the proposal that would specifically address identified needs and gaps. Therefore, this section received a low medium rating.

C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	6

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(a) In this section, Iberville Parish School District proposal did not delineate the sub-criterion, so it was up to the reviewer to try and align the submitted paragraphs to specific sub-criterion.

(i) Students understand what they are learning as key to success. There was a reference that with the support of parents and educators, all students would understand that learning the Quality Core curriculum is key to successful implementation of college ready curriculum within the learning process. Additional details were needed on how specifically this would be accomplished.

(ii) Students identify and pursue learning and development goals. There was a reference to students having individualized learning plans through both web-based and face-to-face delivery systems. Later, there was a reference that in the RtI framework, students are tiered to ensure a personalized sequence of instructional content. Based on the academic tiers, students participating in blended learning that is developmentally appropriate and designed to foster skill development and enable students to achieve their individual learning goals. But more clarification was needed as to how students would structure their learning to achieve their goals and measure progress toward their goals.

(iii) Student involvement in deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest: There was a statement that students would have access to traditional and non-traditional environmental settings and varying perspectives of educational modalities that will motivate and deepen individual student learning. Later, the proposal mentioned that differentiated learning models would be used to enable students to be actively involved in deep learning experiences. However, the statement did not include areas of academic interest. Therefore, this section was not fully addressed.

(iv) Student access to diverse cultures. The proposal described that with the expansion of AP courses, dual-enrollment opportunities, and differentiated blended learning, that students would have access to traditional and non-traditional environments that would motivate and deepen individual student learning. However, there was not a specific reference to students having access to and exposure to diverse cultures and contexts that would motivate and deepen student learning.

(v) Master critical content and develop skills. This section referenced that the incorporation of blended learning would provide for individual and teamwork student efforts that would incorporate critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving.

(b) Iberville Parish School District proposed the following:

(i) Personalized sequence: There was one reference that students, who are tiered under the RtI framework, would have a personalized sequence of instructional content. But this needed further elaboration, particularly how the sequence would enable students to achieve their individual goals and ensure that students graduate on time and college and career-ready.

(ii) Variety of instructional approaches and environments: The proposal identified the following instructional approaches and

environments: blended learning, differentiated teaching, dual enrollment opportunities, virtual and school-based environements. Given the variety of identified approaches, this sub-criterion was addressed.

(iii) High quality and digital content: The proposal referenced instructional content aligned with Common Core State standards and/or the state's grade level expectations, technology-based curriculum, a listing of AP courses and dual enrollment courses, and a listing of software programs (e.g. FastForward, APEX Learning). This sub-criterion was addressed as the applicant identified high-quality content.

(iv) Ongoing and regular feedback that includes:

(A) Frequently updated individualized data. The proposal referred to a data-driven instructional model where data is disaggregated to assess student and teacher strengths and needs as well as the TAP model that is used to assess student and academic progress through standardized test scores, attendance records, and overall performance. There was a general statement that teaching and learning is based on student data and progress monitoring, but it did not identify how frequently the student data is updated and how this data is specifically used to assess progress toward mastery of standards. The proposal needed more information.

(B) Personalized learning recommendations: The proposal described a general approach to differentiation of instruction by students' learning styles and academic abilities. Additional information was provided on its intervention program and tiered approach. It stated that students are tiered to ensure a personalized sequence of instructional content. But the proposal did not specifically identify how ongoing and regular feedback is used to specifically target recommendations for personalized learning.

(v) Accommodations and strategies for high-need students: The proposal identified that the district intended to incorporate differentiated blended learning model to address the specific learning needs of at-risk and exceptional learning need students. This section needed more details on how this would be operationalized.

(c) Training and support to students so they would manage their own learning. There was no specific description of training and support so students would use tools and resources to track and manage their learning. This section was not addressed.

Overall, based on comments above, this section received a rating in the low medium range.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	9

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(a) In this section, Iberville Parish School District proposal did not delineate the sub-criterion, so it was up to the reviewer to try and align the submitted paragraphs to specific sub-criterion. Iberville Parish School District did not include a project plan with goals, activities, timelines and persons responsible in this section. Rather in the appendices, there was a copy of the district accountability plan which included goals, activities, persons responsible, timelines, and evaluation. In the plan there were references to professional development activities for the following grade levels and topics relevant to the proposed project: 4th-8th grade – data-driven instructional model (TAP); 9th grade - writing across curriculum, EXPLORE test, data-driven instructional model; 10th grade - PLAN test; 11th grade – ACT test, and data-driven instructional model. Other professional development activities in the plan were identified for kindergarten readiness. Within this section, there were references to the following professional development activities: QualityCore curriculum and resources (e.g. rigor and relevance, depth of knowledge and cognitive demand, assignments, constructed-responses), use of Blackboard, effective use of Blended Learning Models, curriculum requirements for AP courses, increase content knowledge of core middle and high school students in English and mathematics that would ensure instruction through project-based activities, multi-media resources, discussion, and scaffold instruction (with a local university through graduate assistants).

(a) Engaging educators in training, professional teams, or communities that support: The proposal provided an overview of their Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) which incorporated master teachers meeting with classroom teachers and holding cluster meetings which includes professional development and review of student data. In addition, they referenced content courses and workshop focused on improving instruction. Therefore, this criterion was addressed by the information provided by the applicant and the TAP program represents a strong teaching and learning program.

(i) Support effective implementation of personalized learning environments and strategies: The proposal stated that the district supports the implementation of the research-based strategies through the TAP program.

(ii) Adapt content and instruction: There was a reference that professional development is needed to increase content knowledge of core middle and high school students in English and mathematics that would ensure instruction through project-based activities, multi-media resources, discussion, and scaffold instruction and assist with the adaptation of content and instruction(with a local university through graduate assistants).

(iii) Frequent measure student progress: The district described a data-driven instructional model along with the identification of data from summative and formative assessments, and informal assessments. They noted that schools use assessment methods and data walls to monitor student progress on academic and behavioral measures. Based on the information provided, the applicant addressed the subcriterion.

(iv) Improve practice and effectiveness by using feedback from evaluation systems: The proposal referenced that the district's professional development activities, which are aligned with the state's new teacher evaluation system, would be able to provide feedback and target professional development to improve instruction.

(b) Educators access to and use of tools, data, and resources: The resources must include:

(i) Actionable information to accelerate student progress and respond to individual student needs and interests: The proposal identified that they use a variety of student performance data to monitor student progress but there were no specific references to using information to respond to student interests nor accelerating student progress. Therefore, this subcriterion was not fully addressed.

(ii) Provide high-quality learning resources (including digital instructional content and assessments): The proposal referenced the QualityCore resources in instruction, the web-based program A3 to access state and benchmark testing data, and assessment notebooks that will be or are shared. The applicant addressed this subcrterion. A variety of resources appeared strong.

(iii) Provide processes and tools to match student needs with specific resources and approaches: The proposal did not include a description of processes and tools that match student needs with specific resources and approaches and improve feedback on the effectiveness of the resources in meeting student needs. Therefore, this subcriterion was not fully addressed.

(c) Participating leaders and leadership teams have training, policies include:

(i) Using evaluation system for continuous school improvement: The proposal identified that school management teams can use data to identify strengths and mitigate weaknesses. They described a situation in which a teacher is making exemplary progress. But the proposal did not describe how management teams would use the system to improve individual and collective educator effectiveness and school culture and climate. Therefore, this subcriterion was not fully addressed.

(ii) Training, systems, and practices for school progress toward goals and closing achievement gaps. The proposal included a general description of their processes for improving school progress in school performance, but they did not specifically describe how their training, systems, and practices, would specifically be used in this project to address goals and close achievement gaps. Therefore, this subcriterion was not fully addressed.

(d) Plan for increasing numbers of highly effective teachers: The proposal referenced how the teacher evaluation system defines highly effective, effective, and ineffective. But did not specify how they would address hard-to-staff schools, subjects (such as math and science), and specialty areas (such as special education). The accountability plan did not include this information either. Therefore, this subcriterion was not fully addressed.

Overall, this section received a rating in the medium range.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	6

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal included D.1. and D.2. with no demarcation of the sections and the sub-criterion, so it was up to the reviewer to try and correspond the submitted paragraphs to specific sub-criterion.

 (a) Iberville Parish School District proposal described their approach to shared decision-making and general responsibilities to support schools and monitor the district's accountability plan. This section should have identified all the grant-related personnel who were referenced in the personnel section of the budget, including the college and career readiness grant coordinator, the school-based IT personnel and the LSU graduate assistants.

(b) The proposal described school improvement team membership and activities. They also described in general terms their allocation of resources and teachers. However, it did not include descriptions of the flexibility and autonomy schools have over school schedules and calendars, personnel decisions and staffing models, the roles and responsibilities for educators and non-educators, and school-level budget.

 (c) Students earn credit based on mastery and not time: This sub-criterion was not specifically addressed.

(d) Opportunities for student mastery at multiple times/ways: The proposal identified the following opportunities: AP classes, dual credit courses with a local college, after-school and summer programs, and two programs - credit recovery, and graduation assistance. The credit recovery assists students who failed coursework and need to repeat a class. The graduation assistance program is for overage students to accrue credits through an expedited schedule.

(e) Learning resources and instructional practices adaptable accessible to SWD and ELL: The proposal provided a general description that identified differentiation of instruction by teachers, early intervention programs, special education programs and classes, and other programs. There was no specific reference to English language learners; while the proposal identified Hispanic students as a student group, there was no information on the extent to which these students were also considered English language learners.

Based on the comments above, this section is rated in the low medium range.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	4

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

In this section, Iberville Parish School District proposal did not delineate section D.1. from D.2. and sub-criterion for D.1. and D.2, so it was up to the reviewer to try and correspond the submitted paragraphs to specific sub-criterion.

(a) Stakeholders access to content, tools, and resources for implementation: The applicant did not specifially address all aspects of this sub-criterion, particularly how the system would ensure that all stakeholders have the necessary content, tools, and resources to support the implementation of the proposed project. Instead, the proposal generally described the allocation of resources to its schools based on allocation formulas and that all teachers have opportunities to request and purchase needed materials and resources given budgets.

(b) Stakeholders appropriate levels of technical support: The proposal did not address all aspects of the sub-criterion, particularly the role of the proposed school-based IT personnel, the LSU graduate assistants, who were listed in the budget, in supporting students, parents, educators, and stakeholders. The section also did not address the peer support sub-criterion. Rather, the proposal listed a variety of available technologies in schools, (e.g., laptops, SmartBoards, etc.). The district's website provides a variety of resources. For parents, the proposal identified a parent portal that provides access to children's grades and emails. The proposal should have referenced the role of the proposed school-based IT personnel and the LSU graduate assistants who were identified in the budget section.

(c) The use by parents and students of information technology systems. The proposal did not specifically identifiy how information would be exported in an open data system and that parents and students could use the data in other electronic systems. The proposal mentioned a parent portal for grades and emails. Therefore, the applicant did not fully respond to this subcriterion.

(d) The use of interoperable data systems, the proposal did not specifically identify that they use an interoperable system that includes data other than student performance data, including human resources, budget, and instructional improvement data. Instead, the proposal only described the district's web site, technologies for schools, the A3 program, and the JPAMS student management system.

Based on comments above, this section received a medium rating.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	3

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Iberville Parish School District proposal did not delineate the sub-criterion for E.1. and E.2., and, so it was up to the reviewer to try and correspond the submitted paragraphs to specific sub-criterion. Iberville Parish School District proposal described their current continuous improvement cycle which occurs at the district and school level. There was one reference in the description that the evaluation of the impact of new learning in classrooms would help cluster group members identify additional problems, needs, or areas of further refinement. But it was not clear if this statement directly related to the proposed blended learning project.

They did not specifically identify how this process would be used with the proposed project to provide timely and regular

feedback on progress toward project goals and opportunities for ongoing corrections and improvement during and after the grant. They did not specifically identify how the district would monitor, measure, and publicly share information on the quality of the investments funded by Race to the Top.

The proposal received a rating in the low range.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	1

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Iberville Parish School District proposal did not present a specific high-quality plan that directly related to the implementation of the proposed RTTT plan. Instead, the district described a general three step plan for engaging and communicating with stakeholders. But the three step plan was not described in specific terms that related to their proposal that would directly provide continuous information to improve their proposed project of hybrid learning. Based on these comments, the section was rated in the low range. Therefore, the applicant did not fully address this subcriterion.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	1

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Iberville Parish School District proposal only submitted complete performance measure tables that included: for all students: a, b, and c; for grades 4-8 (which they identified the range as 5-8 within the table): a, b, and c; and for grades 9-12: a through

e. This section did not include performance measures for PreK-3rd grade. A total of 11 performance measures were provided in this section which did not meet the required total range of approximately 12 to 14 performance measures. For some performance measures, the proposal did not provide an explanation of why some data was not available for 2012-13 and 2013-14 and for African American and economically disadvantaged. In general the performance measures appeared achievable but not ambitious.

(a) The proposal did not include rationales for the selection of major performance measures.

(b) The proposal did not identify how measures will provide rigorous, timely, and formative information:

(c) The proposal did not identify how it will review and improve measures over time.

Overall, this section received a rating of low.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	1

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Iberville Parish School District proposal identified that they developed an evaluation plan to ensure effectiveness of investments. They identified that each activity for college and career readiness and professional development had been broken into manageable sections with the identification of persons responsible and method of evaluation. They referenced that the appendix included an evaluation of effectiveness plan; however the reviewer only found the District Accountability Plan which included an evaluation column. For example, for professional development, the evaluation identified sign-in sheets, lesson plans, and item samples from teachers. This does not constitute a plan to evaluate the effectiveness of activities that would result in improving use of time, staff, money, or other resources. Therefore, this section was rated low.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	4

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(a) Iberville Parish School District proposal included a rationale and the following completed budget tables: 1-1 Overall budget summary, 2-1, overall budget summary project list, and table 4-1 project level itemized costs. The overall budget summary identified RTTT funds and under 12. Funds from other sources to support the project totaled over $9 million. However, they did not identify the sources of these funds in the budget section.

(b) Reasonable and sufficient. The proposed budget appeared reasonable and sufficient to support the implementation of the project.

(c) Rationale for investments and priorities including: The proposal included a rationale for each of the items in the overall budget summary and project-level itemized costs. This section appeared to contain the first reference to a college and career readiness grant coordinator which should have been included in (D)(1). Section (d)(1) should have also included the school-based IT personnel and the LSU graduate assistants. In addition, a further description of roles and responsibilities was needed for each of these positions. The proposed purchase of laptops for students to expand their initiative needed further explanation as did the ACT Prep activities: Princeton Review.

(i) Description of all funds to support project: Under 12. Funds from other sources to support the project totaled over $9 million. However, they did not identify the sources of funds in the budget section.

(ii) The proposal did not specifically identify funds that would be used for one-time investments versus those that would be used for ongoing operational costs. The only reference was in table 4-1 and that the college and career readiness grant coordinator would be a temporary position.

Overall, this section received a rating in the medium range.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	4

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Iberville Parish School District proposal stated that they planned to sustain the initiatives through a braded funding approach that would potentially use: MFP, EEF, 8g, and Title I, Title II, IDEA, and Carl Perkins. They also identified intermediary activities that would facilitate the identification and use of alternative funding strategies during the next two years. A variety of strategies were proposed. However, the section did not include a specific plan nor a budget for the three years after the term of the grant that would include budget assumptions, and uses of funds. Therefore, this section received a rating in the medium range.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	2

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

Iberville Parish School District proposal did not delineate the sub-criterion for the competitive priority and, so it was up to the reviewer to try and correspond the submitted paragraphs to specific sub-criterion.

(1) The Iberville Parish School district described their partnerships with Supplemental Educational Service Providers, the Capitol Area Human Service District, Head Start/Early Head Start, Department of Health, and Hospital's Early Step program. The proposal identified that they intended to partner with Betty's Hope or a similar agency that would provide mobile outreach, resources, and support programming for students and their families.

(2) The proposal presented a completed table for population-level desired results that included educational results for students with disabilities, 3 and 4 year olds, and economically disadvantaged students and behavioral (attendance) for students with social, emotional, and/or behavioral issues. Desired results were generally stated (e.g. increase proficiency of this subgroup in English and math).

(3) The proposal provided a completed Competitive Prefer3ence Priority: Performance Measures table with the identification of performance measures, applicable population, baseline, and targets. Performance measures for the performance of students with disabilities in grades 5-8 on state mandated assessments increased yearly by 6% and for economically disadvantaged students by 3.% to 4%. For kindergarten students, the yearly targets increases ranged from 1% to 2.5%. For student attendance, the yearly targets increased by .5%.The proposal did not reference another section nor in this section describe how the partnership would: (a) track the selected indicators that measure each result at the aggregate level for all children; (b) use the data to target its resources to improve results for participating students; (c) develop a strategy to scale the model beyond the participating schools; and (d) improve results over time.

(4) The proposal did not describe how the partnership would, within participating schools,integrate services. There was only a reference that that the system hoped to create a safe and empowering environment for young people and communities to deal with their social, emotional, and behavioral issues. Therefore, this subcriterion was not fully addressed.

(5) The proposal did not address any of the sub-criterion for how the partnership would build the capacity of staff in participating schools.

(6) The annual performance measures for the performance of grade 5-8 students with disabilities on state mandated assessments increased yearly by 6% and for economically disadvantaged students by 3% to 4%. For kindergarten students, the yearly targets increases ranged from 1% to 2.5%. For student attendance, the yearly targets increased by .5%. The performance measures appeared achievable but not ambitious for economically disadvantaged students (only yearly increases of 3% to 4%) and students with disabilities (Yearly increases by 6%).

Given the comments above, this section received a low rating.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:		
Iberville Parish School District proposed a district-wide grade 5-12 integrated blended learning program with a three tiered Response to Intervention system to implement college and career readiness initiatives. The proposal builds on the core educational assurance areas. Refer to specific comments and ratings on each selection criteria.		

Total	210	74

Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0898LA-2 for Iberville Parish School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	5

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

1. The applicant included a plan to implement a six level blended learning model for all K-12 students to allow rural students in the Parish the same opportunities for advanced placement, duel enrollment and remediation as more heavily populated areas.
2. The plan indicates that this project would challenge average students to move ahead and and that research indicates that high risk students flourish when offered an individualized curriculum and attention.
3. The applicant indicates that the district has several significant geographical barriers.

Weakness

1. The applicant does not indicate how a blended learning model will remove or diminish geographic barriers.
2. The applicant did not specifically articulate a comprehensive and coherent r**eform vision** that builds on its work in four core educational assurance areas.
3. The applicant states that the blended model will increase access to space and time independence, while reducing costs. No evidence is shared to support this statement.
4. Increasing equity through personalized student support to improve academic achievements was not specifically

addressed by the applicant.

5. It is unclear if equity will be increased through reducing subgroup gaps since the applicant did not provide data for subgroups other than African American and economically disadvantaged students.

The score is in the mid range as a reform vision was partly articulated.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	3

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

1. The approach to implementing the proposal is designed to separate students into three tiers, then to assign them to one of six levels of the blended learning model proposed.
2. The applicant would include students in grades 5-12. (a) The process to select grade levels to participate was a round table discussion with the principals, teachers, and the superintendent.

Weaknesses

1. It is unclear if the round table discussion to select grade levels was a one time discussion, what data was reviewed, or if parents are aware or supportive of the application.
2. The LEA included Parish data and did not include the names of the schools that would participate or the number of schools that would participate.
3. The applicant included that the 80% of all students that would participate were high need and low income. The applicant did not define what they considered high need. It is unclear if these students have high academic needs or socio economic needs.

The applicant scored in the low range for not meeting all of the criteria for this section.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	6

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths:

1. The applicant will use the RI Model to rank students by three tiers based on their standardized test data, benchmark data, GPA, and student recommendations.
2. The applicant proposes at 6 level Blended Learning Model that integrates with the RI model to provide a move personalized learning environment.

Weakness:

1. The applicant did not include a plan to scale up their blended learning model to all schools in the Parish.
2. Insufficient information is provided to assess how the blended learning model would translate into meaningful reform beyond participating schools.
3. A logic model or theory of change to improve student learning outcomes was not provided.
4. Programs such as Blended Learning and RI were described, however the applicant did not provide sufficient information to demonstrate that these programs would assist the applicant reach outcome goals, thus the score is in the mid range.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	4

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths:

The applicant will use the RTI model to assess and assign students to six different blended learning models.

The applicant has provided goals based on summative assessments to close subgroup gaps.

Weaknesses:

The applicant provided the chart for (A)(4), however the data was limited and some information was inconsistent with the application proposal.

(A)(4)(a) The student data was not separated by grade level and did not address all subgroups, thus subgroup gaps could not be determined. The first Goal area indicated that the % of 4th grade students arriving would rise annually. This grant does not serve 4th grade students thus it is not likely that their scores would rise as a result of the program. The applicant did not include data for African American or Economically disadvantaged students in the 11th grade. The applicant indicated that the number of 11th grade students on track for college would rise based only on ACT assessment data. Post grant, the goals appear to be low. For example, after three years, only 50% of African American 9th grade students would arrive in 9th grade proficient for the grade level.

(A)(4)(b) The applicant did not include data identifying all subgroups. The applicant grouped large numbers of students and three subject areas together. In is not possible to determine from this chart if gaps exist in math or English since both were combined. It is not possible to identify grade level gaps since grades 5-8 and grades 9-11 were combined. No data was provided for grade 12.

(A)(4)(c) Data for graduation rates was incomplete and did not include subgroup information.

(A)(4)(d) Data for college enrollment rates was incomplete and did not include subgroup information. It is unclear how baseline data can indicate that 61.9% of students enrolled in college in 2011-2012, when the previous chart indicated that only 55.4% of students graduated from high school.

B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	7

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

1. Based on the information shared by the applicant, the Parish has adopted a transformational school turnaround model and has closed several low achieving schools.The districts school performance score has risen slightly each year since 2008.

2. The applicant indicated District Performance reports were shared via a website and that they were presented to the school board.

Weaknesses

1. The applicant did not demonstrate that they have a record of improving student learning outcomes and closing achievement gaps, raising student achievement, increasing high school graduation rates, or increasing college enrollment rates;

2. The applicant indicated that they have struggled for many years and has consistently produced and undereducated and impoverished population.

3. It is unclear if the application would improve persistently lowest-achieving schools or in its low-performing schools since school level data and the names of the schools were not identified in the grant.

4. Although they state that they remind parents about school goals, the applicant did not indicate how student performance data was available to students, educators , and parents in ways that inform and improve participation and instruction.

The applicant dues not appear to have a demonstrated record of success and failed to include data to support a record of success, thus they were awarded a low midrange score.

	Available	Score
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	2

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

1. The Parish presents it budget internally and to the public at a school board meeting.

2. The budget included personnel salaries for all employees and was formatted to ease understanding.

Weaknesses

1. The level of transparency cannot be determined for LEA processes, practices and investments form the information included.

2. The applicant indicates that sharing information with the public is important, however he applicant did not indicate if the salaries for school level instructional and support staff were based on US Census Bureau classification.

The applicant presented information that met at least half of the criteria, thus this section is scored in the high low range.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	**10**	**3**

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

1. The applicant provided specific references to state, federal, and local policies that supported teacher evaluation, teacher talent, state curricular goals, network structure, ESEA, technology plans, school administration.
2. The applicants plan is to implement a blended learning model in grades 5-12.

Weaknesses

1. None of the policies provided directly demonstrated that the Parish would have sufficient autonomy under state legal, statutory, and regulator requirements to implement this plan, the score is in the low range. The policies do address personal learning, however the entire project is based on the Parishes ability to allow students to participate in the blended model.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	**10**	**3**

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

1. The applicant included some evidence of stakeholder engagement support of the project (letters of support)

Weaknesses

1. The applicant did not present evidence that stakeholders where engaged in the development of the application.

2. None of the five letters of support were from Parent or Student organizations; the proposal would have a significant effect on this population, thus their engagement and support would seem to be crucial.

3. The applicant held focus groups, however they did not indicate how students and families in participating schools were engaged in the development of the proposal or how the proposal was revised based on their engagement and feedback.

4. The applicant did not indicate whether or not they had or did not have collective bargaining representation.

5. The survey instrument did not indicate teacher support for the application, the activities in the survey were not the activities described in the grant. The survey did not address a hybrid learning model.

This criteria was scored in the low range for failing to meet minimum requirements and not including all of the support and engagement information requested.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	0

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

Weaknesses

The applicant indicated that unidenfied research indicated that college and career readiness was greatly impacted by 8th grade academic achievement, therefore they would implement a 5-12 blended learning model. The applicant did not provide sufficient status data to support their current status in implementing personalized learning environments including needs and gaps that will be addressed. Providing some students with computers does not describe a plan for a personal environment.

The applicant also shared that they have a data system and that it is capable of data analysis including subgroups. This contradicts previous charts where data was listed as not available and subgroups were not detailed. The chart provided in this section did not support the logic behind the proposal and did not sufficiently identify subgroup gaps. It is not possible to determine the gaps between white and African American students from this information or from any information in the grant. This does not indicate that the applicant has a prior record of success of analysis of needs and gaps or that they can identify subgroup gaps.

At minimum, the applicant was asked to address the goals, activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties. The applicant did not address minimal requirements, thus no points were awarded. Providing the Parish accountabilty plan did not address grant requirements or grade levels.

C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	6

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

There is little indication that the applicant's plan will improve learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college- and career-ready. The applicant details plans to transition all 5-12 grade students to a blended learning model, but does not address curricular improvements or all students or using individual data in to improve academic outcomes.

Strength:

1. The applicant described in general what they were currently offering to all students and that they would like to implement a blended learning model. This model would expand AP course selection, dual enrollment, and incorporate technology into traditional and non-traditional classroom activities. They addressed this approach as a rigorous curriculum.
2. The applicant did include, in the list provided several technology based programs such as FastForward, APEX Learning, and My Math Lab.

Weaknesses:

1. A list of academic and technology resources that the applicant would include in the grant is provided, however a comprehensive approach to implementing instructional strategies for all participating students that enable participating students to pursue a rigorous course of study aligned to college- and career-ready standards and college- and career-ready graduation requirements and accelerate his or her learning through support of his or her needs is not adequately detailed.
2. The applicant did not address how they would engage and empower all students and parents. The applicant included information on an "early intervention" program to help identify at risk students that prevented students from developing learning disabilities. It is unclear if this program is for early learners not included in this grant or for all students.
3. The applicant discussed other strategies for grade levels not served by the grant, and did not address closing learning gaps or meeting the academic needs of students who were identified as economically disadvantaged.
4. The applicant did not address how students and parents would understand that what they are learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals;
5. The applicant did not Identify or indicate how they would pursue learning and development goals linked to college- and career-ready standards or how they would measure progress toward those goals.
6. The applicant did not address how students would have access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and

perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning.

7. Changing the curriculum delivery model to a Blended model did not adequately describe how students would master critical academic content and develop skills and traits such as goal-setting, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving.
8. The applicant did not provide evidence that parents and educators supported the project and that students would have access to a personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development designed to enable the student to achieve his or her individual learning goals and ensure he or she can graduate on time and college- and career-ready;
9. The standards and teachers would remain the same and there is not data included on the content that would be delivered in the blended model.
10. The applicant indicated that the program will vary by tier but did not specifically include goals or standards for each tier intended to help students meet learning goals
11. Although the applicant indicated that each student would have an individual learning plan, they did not detail a system for ongoing and regular feedback, including, frequently updated individual student data that can be used to determine progress toward mastery of college- and career-ready standards, or college- and career-ready graduation requirements.
12. The applicant addressed that teachers would need training and support but did not detail what mechanisms would be in place to provide training and support to students to ensure that they understand how to use the tools and resources provided to them in order to track and manage their learning.

The plan for six levels of blended learning with varying degrees of face to face and technology based instruction details how curriculum would be delivered however it doesn't address the quality of the program, including content based strategies, that would be delivered, thus the score is in the low range.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	12

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

1. The applicant is part of the Teacher Advancement Program.
2. They included detailed information regarding how all in the Parish educators engage in training, and in professional teams or communities that supports their individual and collective capacity.
3. The professional development plan indicated that data is collected with strategies are field-tested.
4. A variety of student assessments were shared. Teachers would use data to inform both the acceleration of student progress and the improvement of the individual and collective practice of educators.
5. A new teacher and principal evaluation system will require teachers to be assessed using student growth. This system has been approved at the state level and is intended to improve teachers' and principals' practice and effectiveness by using feedback provided by the LEA's teacher and principal evaluation systems. Professional development plans will include student level data.
6. All participating educators appear to have access data and training to use, tools, data, and resources currently available in the Parish.
7. Teachers, coaches, and administrators created benchmarks based on student data. The applicant proposes to implement a program called High Quality Core in a Blended Learning model.
8. The TAP program has developed collaborative teams with training, policies, tools, data, and resources that enable them to structure an effective learning environment that meets individual student academic needs and accelerates student progress through common.

9. The TAP program provides training, systems, and practices to continuously improve school progress toward the goals of increasing student performance and closing achievement gaps according to the applicant. Quality Core would also provide specific training topics.

Weakness

1. The applicant did not indicate that the blended learning model had been field tested to ensure it would meet the needs of local students.
2. The TAP Program prepares teachers to adapt content and instruction, however no information was included demonstrating that it provides opportunities for **students** to engage in common and individual tasks, in response to their academic needs, academic interests, and optimal learning approaches.
3. The applicant did not indicate which assessment would be used for grades 5-12 in the blended model.
4. Actionable information that helps educators to identify optimal learning approaches that respond to individual student academic needs and interests were included in the TAP Program. However this program indicated that strategies would be piloted prior to being implemented based on data. The applicant did not indicate that the proposal to implement a blended learning model was based on data.

5. The applicant did not provide documentation that indicated that this is a High Quality Core Blended learning model high-quality learning resource. The program would include digital resources and the applicant stated that the program would have valid measures to help ensure the status of college- and career-readiness. The applicant did not address how this program included college and career ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements, or the tools to create and share the new resources.

6. It is unclear how the blended learning model and the Quality Core program will effect the TAP Program and how information form this proposal will be used helps school leaders and school leadership teams assess, and take steps to improve, individual and collective educator effectiveness and school culture and climate, for the purpose of continuous school improvement

7. The applicant has a teacher evaluation system, but did not share a plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals, including in hard-to-staff schools, subjects, and specialty areas. Teachers. Teachers would receive a label, however there is no indication that teachers who are not effective would be removed or receive a plan for improvement.

The applicant included a plan to improve teaching and learning, however the plan is currently in place and does not integrated the project described in this application. Thus the applicant scored at the mid range.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	8

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(a) Strength: The information included indicated that the applicant has a centralized district office with staff in place to support improvements in teaching, learning, and student achievement. The district staff take responsibity for school teachers and leaders and collaborate through meetings.

Weakness: The applicant did not indicate that they had the district resources to support a blended learning model of this scale.

(b) Strength: The parish embraces a philosophy of shared decision making.

Weakness: The applicant did not address policies or rules defining the level of flexibility or autonomy school leaders had over schedules and calendars, school personnel decisions and staffing needs, roles and responsibilities for educators and non educators, and school level budgets. The applicant did not indicated that the Parish centralized office the flexibilty or autonomy to implement a blended learning model of this scale.

(c) Weakness: The applicant did not address LEA practices, policies or rules to facilitate personalized learning by giving students the opportunity to progress and earn credit based on demonstrated mastery, not the amount of time spent on a topic; This is highly concerning given the proposal to implement blended learning. It is unclear if blended learning is allowed in the state or Parish. The applicant did not indicated that they were providing it at any level.

(d) Weakness: The applicant did not provide references to practices, policies, or rules that give students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways.

(e) StrengthThe applicant shared that a variety of programs are in place to providing learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students, including students with disabilities and English learners. A gifted program and the RTI program address this criteria. In addition, the applicant shared details regarding other programs for special needs students, tutoring, and summer programs.

(e) Weakness: Practices, policies, and rules related to how these resources would support o support a blended learning model were not detailed.

The applicant addressed some, but not all of criteria in this section, thus the score is in the mid range.

	Available	Score
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	2

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The LEA and school infrastructure supports personalized learning by—

(a) The applicant allocates resources equitably to schools based on formulas. Federal and state moneys are used to ensure equity. The applicant does not share how all participating students , parents, educators , and other stakeholders , regardless of income, have access to necessary content, tools, and other learning resources both in and out of school to support the implementation of the applicant's proposal to implement blended learning.

(b) A list of the technology available in the Parish was provided however the applicant did not address ensuring that students, parents, educators, and other stakeholders have appropriate levels of t**echnical support.**

(c) The applicant did not address using information technology systems that allow parents and students to export their information in an open data format and to use the data in other electronic learning systems. The data is posted on the school website and in the parent portal.

(d) The applicant did not provide details ensuring that LEAs and schools use or will use interoperable data systems. The applicant would add the hybrid learning model but did not address how this model would work with technology systems currently in place.

The applicant did not address more than half of the criteria in this section, thus the score is in the low range.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	2

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant included a strategy for continuous improvement of the TAP program, however they did not include a process for the project described in this application. TAP is a program already in place that does not address implementing a blended learning environment. A process to provide regular feedback to monitor, measure, and publicly share information on the quality of the investment funded by RttT was not address in the application. A low level up points were awarded since the TAP program addresses a plan for teacher continuous improvement.

The TAP model detailed did not addressed a plan for continuous improvement or the implementation of a blended learning model or how the blended learning model would be monitored, measured, or publically shared.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant included a plan to engage and communicate with stakeholders. The three step plan included stakeholder mapping, engagement strategies, and how plans of action are built in the parish. The plan provided a sound approach improvement through communication and engagement.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	0

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant included 11 performance measures with some separated by two subgroups, with annual targets for required and applicant-proposed performance measures.

(a) The applicant did not include Its rationale for selecting each performance measures.

(b) The applicant did not include how each measure will provide rigorous, timely, and formative leading information tailored to its proposed plan and theory of action regarding the applicant's implementation success or areas of concern; and

(c) The applicant did not address how it will review and improve the measure over time if it is insufficient to gauge implementation progress.

The applicant did not have a total 12 to 14 performance measures, they included 11 measures but did not separate them by subgroup.

The applicant did not include subgroup data sufficient to determine subgroup gaps or improvements in closing subgroup gaps.

Since the applicant did not provide the criteria mandatory in (E)(3), no points were awarded.

	Available	Score
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	0

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant refers to a detailed table that outlines the evaluation process for grant funds. This plan could not be located in the appendix. It was also not listed in the appendix table of contents. A plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the RttT District funded activities was not included in the application and a plan was not addressed in any of the other narrative sections.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	3

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Strenth

(a)The applicant listed funds that might be considered to "braid" to support the program beyond the grant period.

Weaknesses

(b) Based on the information provided, it is not possible to determine if the budget is reasonable. A detailed narrative budget was not provided. For example, the line item for supplies, indicates computers; it does not indicate how many.

(c) Rationals for all investments and priorities were not included. The narrative summarized what the applicant wanted to buy with grant funds but did not offer a rational for each purchase.

(i) The applicant did not fully describe all of the funds that will be used to support the project. Revenue from other sources was included in the summary table. No information identified where this funding would be found or who would provide it. The funds from other sources exceeded 9 million dollars. Without this funding the project would not be possible based on the budget.

(ii) The applicant did not identify which funds would be used for one time investments versus those used for ongoing operational costs. Cost assumptions were left blank.

Table 4-1 included information for only one year of the grant and did not include all of the funds for the total budget. The funds from other sources were not included in 4-1 that appear in Table 1-1 line 12. The budgets are inconsistent, thus the scores for this section is low.

	Available	Score
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	4

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant included a plan for sustainability that indicated the Parish would braid grant funds with other federal and state funds. While it is not clear if this system is allowable for all of the funds listed, this effort supports sustainability. The applicant also listed a variety of strategies that would be used to facilitate the identification and use other other funding.

Although state and local funds were identified, the applicant did not indicate specific dollar amounts and stated that the use of the funds was only potential. Given the size of this grant project, and the lack of specific funding sources, the project has a poor potential for being sustained.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

(1) The applicant did not provide a description of the coherent and sustainable partnership that it has formed with public or private organizations, such as public health, before-school, after-school, and social service providers; integrated student service providers; businesses, philanthropies, civic groups, and other community-based organizations; early learning programs; and postsecondary institutions to support the plan described. They plan to partner with some local groups, however non would specifically be aligned to this project and no evidence was include in the application to support the existence of partnerships. Since this grant is for a 5-12 grade project, it is unclear how a partnership with headstart would be supportive.

(2) The applicant did not Identify any population-level desired results for students in the LEA that align with and support the applicant's broader Race to the Top – District proposal.

(3) Describe how the partnership would –

    (a) Not Addressed: Track the selected indicators that measure each result at the aggregate level for all children within the LEA or consortium and at the student level for the participating students (as defined in this notice);

    (b) Not Addressed: Use the data to target its resources in order to improve results for participating students (as defined in this notice), with special emphasis on students facing significant challenges, such as students with disabilities, English learners, and students affected by poverty (including highly mobile students), family instability, or other child welfare issues;

    (c) Not Addressed: Develop a strategy to scale the model beyond the participating students (as defined in this notice) to at least other high-need students (as defined in this notice) and communities in the LEA or consortium over time; and

    (d) Not addressed: Improve results over time;

(4) Not addressed: Describe how the partnership would, within participating schools (as defined in this notice), integrate education and other services (e.g., services that address social-emotional, and behavioral needs, acculturation for immigrants and refugees) for participating students (as defined in this notice);

(5) Not addressed: Describe how the partnership and LEA or consortium would build the capacity of staff in participating schools (as defined in this notice) by providing them with tools and supports to –

    (a) Not addressed: Assess the needs and assets of participating students (as defined in this notice) that are aligned with the partnership's goals for improving the education and family and community supports (as defined in this notice) identified by the partnership;

    (b) Not Addressed: Identify and inventory the needs and assets of the school and community that are aligned with those goals for improving the education and family and community supports (as defined in this notice) identified by the applicant;

    (c) Not Addressed: Create a decision-making process and infrastructure to select, implement, and evaluate supports that address the individual needs of participating students (as defined in this notice) and support improved results;

    (d) Not Addressed: Engage parents and families of participating students (as defined in this notice) in both decision-making about solutions to improve results over time and in addressing student, family, and school needs; and

    (e) Not Addressed: Routinely assess the applicant's progress in implementing its plan to maximize impact and resolve challenges and problems; and

(6) Not addressed: Identify its annual ambitious yet achievable performance measures for the proposed population-level and describe desired results for students.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:		

The applicant met the minimum criteria for priority 1 for creating a personalized learning environment.

The six level blended learning program described in this application would require that each students had an individual plan aligned to there learning style and academic capabilities.

The applicant proposes to implement a blended learning program that are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies, tools, and supports for students and educators that are aligned with college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements ;

The applicant proposes to implement a blended learning program to accelerate student achievement and deepen student learning by meeting the academic needs of each student;

The applicant proposes to increase the effectiveness of educators and expand student access to the most effective educators through a teacher assessment system and professional development for teachers.

The applicant proposes to decrease achievement gaps across student groups; and increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers through the blended learning model, increased dual enrollment, AP coursework, and increased attention for students who need it the most.

Total	210	75

Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0898LA-3 for Iberville Parish School District

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	8

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Applicant, Iberville Parish School District (IPSD), has clearly identified its reform vision to include a blended learning program for its 5-12 grade students, based on a 'transformation model' for school turnaround initiatives (p. 31).

- allows for equity of rural students to accelerate learning by providing access to AP courses, dual enrollment, remediation programs, virtual coursework
- individualizes curriculum and instruction
- challenges average students

For this selection criteria, applicant failed to provide specific evidence of how the reform would support all of the four assurance areas (e.g. applications describes how funds would provide for six graduate assistants to be embedded to help mentor blended learning environment, but it's unclear how this fits in with assurance of "recruiting, developing, and retaining effective teachers and principals where they are needed most.")

Page 50, section (B)(5) of this proposal articulates a clearer vision of how blended learning supports the four assurance areas (i.e. "...college and career ready, the IPSS has begun to shift focus from standards proficiency to college and career ready..." with support documentation in Appendix section of the Districts' Accountability Plan that describes the adoption of CCSS, measuring students growth, teacher and principals evaluation).

	Available	Score
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	3

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(a) Applicant supplies a description of the process they used to select the grade spans (5th-12th) of students to be served in this grant (e.g. "Based on the particular needs of the student body and the struggling school district as a whole, school principals, teachers and the superintendent felt that dipping down to 5th grade would offer their students an opportunity for an early start to a new concept of instruction" (pg. 26). Applicant lacks research/data to support their reasoning for the grade span chosen to use in blended learning approach.

(b) Applicant provides confusing information for the number of schools participating in grant activities. The data for one school (Iberville Parish) on the School Demographics table (pg. 32) was provided. The applicant provided a screenshot of a table describing dropout rate of cohorts, located among appendix pages, shows that that there are three schools that is participating in the grant activities (Plaquemine Senior High School, White Castle High School, and East Iberville Elementary/High School).

(c) Applicant provides data on the total number of participating students (2,558), and the percent/number of low-income families and high-needs students (80.2%/2052). If there are three schools participating in the grant activities, the data for this criteria was not provided for individual schools.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	7

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The IPSD has a convincing reason to want to expand its current technology initiative in the 5th-12th grades by adding a blending learning environment (e.g. personalized instruction, advanced coursework, virtual options, etc.). The applicant does explain in the narrative the blended learning model design that will be followed at IPSD (e.g students categorized by Tier I, II, and III according to RTI, and other performance assessments/teacher input. Students are placed in appropriate model of individualized learning instructional models prescribed).

The IPSD is including all of the schools in this initiative.

Although the District's Technology plan and the District's Strategic Plan are included in the application, neither provides a clear action plan or logic model that describes the goals of this RTT-D blended learning initiative.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	4

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(a) The State's ESEA/end-of-course test is/will be used to determine summative assessment results/growth. Applicant has presented a convincing case in that given their rural geological boundaries and high rate of poverty issues, a blended learning approach might possibly benefit students who need various learning options. Applicant has provided in the (A)(4a) table goals for increasing proficiency status and growth (ESEA state assessments, iLEAP; LEAP; ACT), but goals were not very ambitious with only an annual overall 1-2% increase in the sub-groups. The sub-groups were not <u>all</u> identified nor were there goals set for these sub-groups. The charts for this section were confusing; the proficiency targets for the different subjects were not identifiable.

(b) The applicant has explained within the narrative how the blended model would decrease achievement gaps (i.e. Students identified into Tiers based on Rti assessment results. As student improve their performance measures, they not only close achievement gap, but they progress upward to a different Tier and a different step in the blending learning format). Applicant has provided in the (A)(4b) table goals for decreasing achievement gaps (iLEAP and EOC assessments), but goals were not very ambitious with only a goal of a 1-2% annual increase in proficiency.

(c) IPSD has provided data (in Appendix) to show dropout rates have lowered the past five years (from 25.2% to 14.5%, which was this past year below the State's average). This proven track record should reflect an increase in graduation rates. Table A(4c) shows the goals for graduation rates (45.6% in 2010-11; 55.4% last year, and a goal of 85% by end of grant). Applicant states in the narrative that by providing a blended learning environment, the students will have more "flexibility and convenience" to have content that is multi-rich and provided to students during times that they choose to want to learn. This goal was fairly ambitious with expecting that the graduation rates will increase annually by 5 to 6%.

(d) IPSD supports their goal of increased college enrollment by promoting differentiated instruction with the blended learning initiative as well as advanced coursework within the virtual courses. There was little evidence that IPSD has partnered with any area colleges to provide a link to higher education opportunities.

B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	**15**	**11**

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(a) Applicant has described in its narrative how the IBSD has improved many aspects of their district in the past five years (i.e. new supt. improvement of policy and finances; district-wide restructuring - implemented strategic improvement plan; teacher effectiveness/value-added program; implement TAP system for teachers to make instructional improvements and advancements), and there was some evidence of a clear record of success for improving student learning outcomes and closing achievement gaps (e.g. The bar graph shown on pg. 41 shows district's performance scores increasing over the past five years. It is hard to determine the impact because there is not a reference to the raw data, such as the number of students/% of students in the district that the graph represents. It also does not provide the assessment that was used, the grades included in this assessment or the population of students included in the data. Cohort graduation rates have increased over the past five years.).

(b) The district data shows that there has been improved test scores (e.g. 72% proficiency in 2008 to 88.2% proficiency in 2012), but it's unclear if this data refers to the "lowest-achieving schools or in its low-performing schools."

(c) Applicant does not address this subcriterion.

	Available	Score
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	**5**	**3**

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Applicant reports that the salaries of all personnel are posted for public viewing at the district administration building and are presented within the monthly budget, which is also posted on the district's website. Applicant also reports that the budget is detailed enough to see actual personnel salaries at each school level. The applicant does not reference to how the budget described is in compliance with the F-33 survey.

	Available	Score
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	**10**	**5**

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Applicant has provided a review of several newly adopted State laws that IPSD states are "firmly rooted in programs that place emphasis on teacher quality as a key factor in improving student achievement." There is evidence provided that IPSD plans to implement the new teacher effectiveness initiative mandated by statute. They document support of the state's 'La Believes Educational Plan', which prescribes an educational plan for students that includes goal setting, assessment and content aligned with standards, feedback and collaboration. The application lacks evidence to support how the these statues/requirements would support autonomy within the blending learning context.

	Available	Score
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	**10**	**3**

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(a-b) Applicant provided some evidence that there was input from all stakeholders in the development of the proposal (e.g. focus groups led by administrators and district leaders). The survey does not specifically address the blended learning initiative. It is not clear that teachers knew that the RTT-D proposal included a model of adding a blended learning to the school.

The proposal had little more than the required support (i.e. 70% of teacher's support, mayor's letter, a web-based survey to teachers/staff; support letters from technical school and ACT program). There was no evidence that students or their parents had input on if this blended model would be supported.

IBSD does not indicate evidence that there is or is not a union bargaining representation; the 70% support of teachers was documented and provided in the proposal.

	Available	Score
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	**5**	**2**

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not adequately address how an analysis of their current status in implementing personalized learning environments led them to the decision of implementing a blended learning initiative for all fifth through twelfth grade students. The proposal shows that there is gaps between the subgroup of economically disadvantaged versus non-economically disadvantaged students and between African American and white students, but the plan does not address how these gaps impacted the decision to implement the blended learning environment.

C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	8

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Learning: Overall, the proposal lacks detail to understand how this reform would be operational. There is not a clear understanding of where the LEA plans to implement the blending learning format as far as academic subjects/students/schools. It's also unclear if all subpopulations would be addressed within the blended learning initiative.

(a) i. Although applicant has proposed a plan to provide students academic counseling and support in completing all documents associated with college entrance, this application does not provide evidence that the students understand that what they are learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals.

ii. Evidence is provided that teachers will be given appropriate tools (i.e. personnel support, tools to view data, leadership, evaluation feedback, pedagogy strategies, etc.) to assist students in meeting goals for college or career achievement, but does not fully describe the training that will be needed to understand how to use the tools.

iii. With adding blended learning opportunities, it is understood/stated that students living in a geological isolated area will be exposed to deep learning experiences through programs of students' interests (i.e. career tech, fine arts, GT, college coursework etc.), but there is not a clear picture describing this.

iv. Applicant does not address if students have access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning.

v. The proposal discusses that there is a college and career curriculum that supports standards of skills and traits such as goal setting, teamwork, perseverance, etc, but it is unclear how this curriculum is provided to students in a blended learning environment or how it is changed from a traditional learning program.

(b) i. A personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development designed to enable the student to achieve his or her individual learning goals and ensure he or she can graduate on time and college- and career-ready is provided by the Applicant as demonstrated in their Action Plan. The Plan lists their learning goals and targets for improvement of academic achievement on performance tests. There is also other targets addressed in the Plan, such as improved attendance, and a decrease in the number of students who are not promoted to the next grade.

ii. The blended learning instructional environment for students in this program offers an individualized learning process based on a Tier criteria resulting from how the student scores on an Rti assessment. The Plan includes some details on how students can progress and move up through the Tiers and have more choices and options of the digital learning format.

iii. Applicant provides some evidence that high-quality content, including digital learning content, aligned with college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements will be offered within the blended learning format. The applicant provides the names of the programs it intends to use (i.e. QualityCore® Curriculum (QCC); Using a Blackboard Delivery System; AP course offerings; ACT preparation courses and intervention for students).

iv. Plan provides some evidence that some sort of feedback will be provided.

v. Plan identifies in several selections that special populations of students have been considered in this proposal (i.e. Special education students will follow an individualized graduation plan, gifted and talented students will have opportunities not provided before RTT-D funds, students with interests in fine arts will be provided programs), but it is unclear the connection of these subgroups to blended learning environments.

(c) IBSD has considered, which is evident in this plan, support for managing learning through a blended learning approach. The proposal is weak in areas of including stakeholders that can assist school district in ensuring sustainability. It also fails to provide a clear picture of how support will be given to families who do not have access to technology/internet resources outside of school environment.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	13

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(a) In the District's accountability plan and within this proposal narrative, IBSD has a plan to provide to its teachers professional development and support in areas of instructional strategies, content aligned to CCSS, differentiated learning in a blended learning environment, assessments to identify the needs of students, college- and career- ready curriculum, etc. (pgs. 54-56).

(b) IBSD has evidence that the plan will support educators in meeting individual needs by using various methods of science-based strategies. Although the applicant describes various software programs (i.e. FastForword, APEX learning and MyMathLab), it is unclear how the applicant will determine if students' interests are considered or how teachers will respond to the data to determine the engagement level of students. The Tier approach for students will support teachers' instructional delivery. The use of instructional environment laid out in the districts' strategy plan will allow for teachers to have continuous feedback though multi-measures (i.e. blackboard discussion virtual classroom settings, Podcasting, etc.).

(c) Applicant adequately describes ways that IBSD meets this section criteria. IBSD has implemented a TAP program. Included in the program is leadership groups consisting of cluster group meetings (e.g. master teachers model teaching strategies and co-teaching, observing/feedback). There is evidence that a strong organization of teacher support is provided for "curriculum, best instructional practices, assessments and positive learning environments" (p. 61).

(d) IBSD demonstrates in various ways how teacher effectiveness will be improved for all students through a new evaluation system, but fails to detail how this information provided by evaluations will be used to improve teaching. There is no evidence that supports ways that the districts plans to staff high need areas or specialty areas within the blended learning format.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	6

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(a) Applicant describes limited amount of evidence that IBSD has practices, policies and rules that establishes how the consortium governance will be structured to implement the reform initiative. There is evidence that within each district, there are some practices that are ongoing (meetings between dept. chairs and administrators and between administrators and central office).

(b) Didn't address the rules or flexibility to the level of autonomy for office staff or infrastructure of a blended learning program.

(c) Rules or policies related to allowing students to advance were not discussed.

(d) Applicant refers to numerous assessments and digital means but not specific to the blended learning model(pgs. 70-71). Applicant does not discuss processes of how students can demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times or in multiple ways.

(e) Applicant proposes providing a variety of programs for all students and all ages (birth to age 5; GT; Rti: SLP, adaptive P.E.. classes; tutoring; summer school) but how these resources would support the age specified for the blended learning model was not identified.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Applicant has sufficient enough evidence that the infrastructure at IBSD can support their blended learning project implementation. The Technology plan in the Appendix as well as the E-rate budget also found in the Appendix, is specific to the technology infrastructure needed/has in place. Weaknesses found were the lack of support mentioned concerning parents and family members having access to program's inputs outside of the school's infrastructure. For example, in technology plan, often the strengths, weaknesses and benchmarks include tools related to teachers and administration, but often the parents and even the students were only mentioned sparsely.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	**15**	**2**

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Although there is a general process for measuring improvement, neither the STEPS (pgs. 76-77) or the Mapping process (p.78) described in the application is related to monitoring continuous improvement of the blended learning environment. Determining the progress of implementing the six steps of blended learning was not described in this section.

	Available	Score
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	**5**	**5**

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Applicant has evidence within its Strategic Plan that the goals for their RTT-D proposal has strategies/activities that require feedback and can be monitored during the evaluation plan. In STEP 5, Step 2 of the TAP/STEPS for Effective Learning program, the applicant adequately describes how stakeholders are not only part of the implementation process, but a part of the plan as steps are taken to improve the program in order to carry out the RTT-D goals and objectives.

	Available	Score
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	**5**	**2**

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

(a) The measurements provided in the Action Plan appear to be rationale.

(b) The applicant fails to address how the measures will provide rigorous, timely, and formative leading information tailored to its proposed plan and theory of action regarding the applicant's implementation success or areas of concern.

(c) Applicant fails to describe how it will review and improve the measures over time if they are insufficient to gauge implementation progress.

	Available	Score
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	**5**	**0**

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Within the Technology plan, a section for Evaluation strategies and timeline are provided, but this is not specific to the RTT-D program implementation. Pg 79 of the proposal states that an "Evaluation of Effectiveness Plan" is a in the Appendix, but this was not found.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	**10**	**5**

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(a) Applicant does an adequate job identifying funds that can support the RTT-D grant funds (e.g. braiding funding process of blending sate funds-MFP, EEF, 8g and federal funds-Title I, II, IDEA, Carl Perkins). It's unclear if some of these funds can be 'braided' into this initiative. The narrative described what they wanted to purchase, but it was unclear if these purchases were a one-time purchase or if there were intentions of this purchasing being an ongoing expenditure in future years of the grant. There was no rationale provided for some of the purchases.

(b) Evidence supports a reasonable and sufficient amount of funding to support blended learning reform initiative and college career objectives as descried in budget narrative.

(c) Budget forms identify detailed proposed budget expenditures and rationale for request was written in proposal narrative pgs. 98-105. Table 4.1 provides a budget for year 1, but nothing was presented for beyond that first year.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	5

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Sustainability of RTT-D funding was partially addressed by applicant. Strategy includes the use of "braided funding approach." This approach calls for IBSD to use all state and federal funding to support initiatives following the grant. There is a concern is that these funds are currently being used to fund other initiatives within the district and cannot sustain the blended learning initiative after the RTT-D grant period ends. It's not clear how this method of braided funding can support and sustain expenses that would be funded by this RTT-D initiative (e.g. fees for dual enrollment, hiring of graduate assistants from university, IT personnel salaries, replacement of computers, etc.).

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	5

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

(a) A description of a coherent and sustainable partnership with public and private organizations was not provided within this application. The applicant provided scant evidence that details about certain sections of this initiative have been planned (i.e. university and graduate assistance plans); and, sustainability of program elements like funding extra personnel to support the blended learning once grant funds end.)

(b) Applicant provided evidence that the needs of the school and community are aligned with the blended learning model. Rural geographic barriers as described in proposal supports a blended learning environment.

(c) With the technology plan and strategic plan attached in the Appendix, a decision-making infrastructure is supported for this reform initiative.

(d) Proposal is weak in the criteria of engaging parents, students and families in deciding on plan for this initiative.

(e) Evaluation plan to show level of progress is not included, although the goals of the plan lists certain evaluation measures.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

Applicant addresses all four core educational assurance areas in the proposals.

(1) Supports CCSS standards and addresses various assessments that IBSD uses or proposes to use in blended learning environment.

(2) Identifies data-driven decision making process in determining Tiers for blended learning format for each student.

(3) Describes the new Teacher/Principal evaluation system, and supports a plan to recruit expertise in areas needed to support blended learning (i.e.IT personnel).

(4) District is using a science based school reform model and has a focus on an initiative to support rural schools' needs for equity of students' learning.

Total	210	105